

for nomination to the National Register.

### **Log Building Construction in Central Delaware**

Although the majority of the resources that survive on the architectural landscape of Delaware today are constructed of brick, frame, or stone, documentary evidence such as tax assessments and orphans court valuations indicate that in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the predominant building material used for both dwellings and outbuildings was log. Surviving log buildings are rare in Delaware and our knowledge of log construction methods is enhanced by each new discovery. A thematic nomination drawing together the known surviving log dwellings and outbuildings to provide a comprehensive discussion of construction techniques and details, as well as illustrating living space and conditions, would provide great insight into the living conditions of ordinary people in Delaware in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. At least three of the properties impacted by the Ridge and Reconstruction alternatives contain dwellings whose core was of log construction and would make significant contributions to such a nomination.

The Brisbane House (N-6320) represents a rare survival of a log dwelling that was originally a 1-story, 2-room plan house. The building was later raised another story in log. The existing fabric of the house preserves its construction history. The R.G. Hayes House (N-5153) is another 1 1/2-story, 2-room plan log house that survives in the study area. Original construction of the dwelling dates to circa 1800 and a corner post frame addition was attached to the house in the early nineteenth century. The Fields Heirs House (N-105), already listed on the National Register, is scheduled for demolition to make way for commercial development just outside of Middletown. The dwelling is partially of log construction and should be documented in greater detail with measured drawings and photography before it is demolished. In this way, the information from the building could still contribute to a thematic nomination on log buildings even though the dwelling itself could not be nominated. These three resources, along with the log granary at Achmester (N-3930) would be essential to include in any thematic nomination dealing with log building construction in Delaware.

### **Early Twentieth Century Farm Planning**

As agricultural practices changed in the early decades of the twentieth century, Delaware's farmscapes also began to change. Many of these changes resulted from the introduction of engine-driven tractors and trucks, the electrification of rural areas, the growing importance of hygienic standards (especially for dairying), the introduction of large-scale poultry farming, and the geographic expansion of truck farming. Older buildings, especially those built to house draft animals, became obsolete and were

either recycled to other purposes or pulled down. At the same time, farmers erected new types and styles of farm structures such as dairy barns and chicken houses. In particular, the issues of health and hygiene on the farm became critical during the early twentieth century and prompted a shift in dairy barn design. However, even the comparatively recent farm architecture of the first half of the twentieth century is disappearing with astonishing rapidity as new housing developments and industrial ventures continue to encroach upon arable land throughout the state. A thematic nomination dealing with farm planning, and dairy farms in particular, would document the way agricultural changes reorganized the Delaware landscape. Resources related to this context that would be impacted by the proposed corridor alternatives include U-293, U-291, U-130, N-5242, and N-3981. The first four properties are all located south of Mount Pleasant and would be impacted by the South Reconstruction or Modified Reconstruction alternatives. In each case the impact would damage the integrity of the agricultural setting and most likely affect the buildings themselves. In each case we would recommend thorough documentation. N-3981 is located on the south side of Route 40 and would be impacted by the North Eastern C-1 and C-2 alternatives.

### **Rural Family Development**

One of the phenomena once common to the agricultural landscape of central Delaware was the construction of multiple farm complexes in close proximity to one another by members of the same family. Kinship ties were particularly important to these farmers and their dwellings often reflect the close interaction of multiple generations. For instance, four of the farms on Route 301 between Middletown and the Maryland state line were all built by members of one family, the Cochrans (Hedgelawn, Cochran's Grange, Summerton, and Rumsey Farm). Another example within the general study area, although not directly impacted by the proposed corridor alternatives is the Claytons Corner area where four farms were constructed by the Clayton family in the nineteenth century. A third example is two dwellings threatened by the South Reconstruction alternative (U-126 and U-212). Located on Route 896, the two dwellings once stood on either side of a third dwelling; the center dwelling belonged to a father who built the other two dwellings for his sons. The two surviving dwellings present mirror images of each other when viewed from the location of the father's house. Additional instances of these family complexes survive in other parts of the state and would make an excellent thematic nomination taken as a group. However, the resources discussed above presently retain much of the integrity of the agricultural landscape that linked them together; this element is often missing in other examples. It is important that every attempt be made to retain the visual integrity of this landscape.